

The Enlightened Signologist

by

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EXT. ON A BUSY STREET CORNER

In a collage of images set to music, a young man in his mid-twenties - long, lanky and certainly nerdy - stands on a street corner while holding a sign that reads: "Mattress Universe." He wears a helmet that has little foam balls (planets) at the ends of wires coming out of it. He greets every car that goes by with enthusiasm.

Title appears on the screen: The Enlightened Signologist

INT. ON A SOFA IN A SMALL APARTMENT

The young Sign Man, RONNIE, sits on the sofa of his apartment waiting patiently for the interview to begin. Behind him are some old family photos and an array of signs, some on sticks, others lying on the floor.

RONNIE

I started signing when I was around
7 or 8.

Text appears on the screen: Ronnie Dilfer, Signologist

RONNIE (CONT'D)

My parents owned a Pet Store, and they used to put me in different costumes, have me stand on the corner to attract customers.

Show still images of RONNIE as a little boy wearing various ridiculous pet costumes. Show parents getting hauled away while little RONNIE wears a fake mustache, holding a sign for LIQUOR, GUNS & AMMO.

RONNIE (CONT'D)

My folks didn't, um, adhere to child labor laws; they ended up getting arrested and stuff. That left me on my own for a while, on the streets. I got by with the only thing I knew - signing.

Show still images of RONNIE working various street corners for small small businesses (Ron Tonkin Honda, Portland Yoga Studio, Voodoo Donuts). He shows some of his favorite signs as well.

RONNIE (CONT'D)

(Touching his chest) I know I've got the talent to be a great signer. One of the best. I'm

dedicated to the craft.

EXT. IN A PARK

A group of 5 young nerdy males hold signs while a distinguished GURU with a long, gray beard leads them in a signing exercise. The "students" are fairly awful, with the GURU trying really hard to be guru-like, even trying, but failing, to speak like Yoda.

GURU

(Interview with GURU with the young signers practicing moves in the background) Holding a sign, it's much more than.

Text appears on the screen: Sri Yogi Guru Todd Baxter

GURU

A signer wills others into the parking lot of said retail establishment, mind power through. Meaningless, the sign is.

GURU strokes, then adjusts, his long beard. It's obviously fake.

RONNIE

(Standing interview at the park)
Signing is all about what's in here (touches his two temples) and what's in here (touches his two nipples), and projecting that into cars going by.

Show RONNIE on the street corner holding a sign for Little Caesars in a calm trance.

RONNIE(CONT'D)

Through the power of mind control, the signer transcends traffic, enters the vehicle, and whispers in the ear of the driver...(leans towards the camera and whispers)
You're hungry. Come to Little Caesars and get a pizza for just \$5 dollars.

RONNIE leans back in his chair, satisfied.

GURU

Good boy, Ronnie is. Potential, he has much, a lot...of it.

RONNIE

I'm learning a lot here at Yogi Baxter's Jedi Signing from the Soul Master Series. Twice a week we come to this secret location and sign till we drop. They say it takes 10,000 hours to be a master at something...well, at this rate, I only have about 9,950 hours to go.

GURU

Detail, it's all about. The level you hold the sign...hand placement at 2:12 and 8:35. A slightly askew sign, more interest, it generates, than a level sign. On one's face, a pleasant look, always a smile, but genuine, creepy not.

GURU smiles awkwardly at the camera.

RONNIE

The goal is to be my own man, with my own unique approach. You know, like Blake Flair. You know Blake Flair?

GURU

(Emotional) I taught Blake Flair everything he knows. First student, best friend, occasional secret lover, he was, before he betrayed me and stole the Great Clips account.

RONNIE

Sometimes a signer gets a sign...a signal of what they're supposed to be. I've seen my vision in my daydreams. It's my destiny to be the best signer in this entire...area of town. Anything or anyone in my way will be...designated for...de-signment. (Looking at camera) I'm coming for you Blake Flair.

GURU

(Upset) I miss Blake so much.

EXT. ON THE STREET CORNER - BLAKE FLAIR

Show BLAKE spinning a sign and dancing all crazy. The sign

reads: GREAT CLIPS. BLAKE is about 5' 8" and stout. He's clean cut and has a bit of a frat boy look and attitude about him.

BLAKE

(Interview setting on the street corner, showing off his moves) No one can touch me. No really, don't touch me. I have a thing about people touching me.

Show more ridiculous sign spinning moves. BLAKE berates a driver that doesn't look at his sign, then chugs an Energy Drink.

BLAKE

(Yelling at a car) Look at my sign. Look at my sign! (Back to camera) You gotta be at the top of your game out here, over the top of your game, tip top gamesmanship.

Show a close-up of the sign spinning.

BLAKE

You know what, I don't care if they can read the sign or not. Not important to me.

Blake does another stupid dance move.

BLAKE

I'm a big leaguer. I've signed for Best Buy, Home Depot, Microsoft, Jet Blue, Clorox, Procter and Gamble, Summer's Eve, so many more. Today it's Great Clips. Sweet gig.

A car pulls up and out gets GURU. The camera PANS back and forth as the two stare each other down.

BLAKE

Well, if it isn't Yogi Guru Todd Baxter, along with his fake beard.

GURU

(Guru leaps forward and a production assistant leaps in to hold him back) Dare you, how!

Blake laughs a hearty evil laugh. CUT TO GURU as he reaches up, takes off his beard, folds it up, and places it in his briefcase.

GURU (CONT'D)
Someone you should meet...you
should.

Show close-up of a perplexed BLAKE. CUT TO GURU as he gets flustered and speaks in his regular voice.

GURU (CONT'D)
(In a regular, non-guru tone)
There's someone you should meet.
Ronnie, get out here.

RONNIE gets out of the car holding a much smaller sign for Great Clips.

BLAKE
What is this?

GURU
Meet my newest apprentice, and
lover.

RONNIE
Wait, what? I'm not...

BLAKE
Oh I see what this is about.

RONNIE
No wait. I'm not his...I'm
Signologist Ronnie Dilfer, and I'm
here to challenge you to a street
corner sign off.

BLAKE'S eyes open wide and his head cocks to the left.

RONNIE
Two signs. Two entrances. One
establishment. The one to get the
most cars in the parking lot in one
hour wins.

BLAKE
Wins what?

RONNIE
The loser must give up
signing...forever.

BLAKE
(Laughing) You're on...

GURU shakes his head in disappointment.

GURU
This wasn't my idea.

EXT. ON A STREET CORNER

Upbeat, chaotic music plays. Show BLAKE FLAIR going crazy, flinging his sign around, dancing and hopping up and down, waving cars into the parking lot. In the bottom left corner of the screen is a ticker of how many cars go into the parking lot from his entrance. In the bottom right is a clock ticking down from 60 minutes.

EXT. ON ANOTHER STREET CORNER

Calm, meditative music plays. Show RONNIE, eyes closed, standing on the corner holding his small sign. RONNIE calmly cocks his head left towards the entrance, opens his eyes wide like a maniac, and starts waving cars into the parking lot. Only, no cars pull in. There is also a counter and a timer in the bottom third of this screen as well.

SPLIT SCREEN - EXT. ON STREET CORNER WITH BLAKE / EXT. ON STREET CORNER WITH RONNIE

Quirky instrumental music plays. We see cars filing in on BLAKE'S side (14, 15, 16, 17...). Meanwhile, on the other corner, we see RONNIE doing his meditative approach. Only 2 cars have pulled in.

EXT. CLOSE-UP OF RONNIE ON THE STREET CORNER

He's sweating, trying so hard, and the tide starts to turn. Music gets more upbeat, more heroic. GURU cheers him on. Cars start filing into his entrance.

SPLIT SCREEN - EXT. ON STREET CORNER WITH BLAKE / EXT. ON STREET CORNER WITH RONNIE

RONNIE brings in 17, 18, 19, 20 cars. BLAKE'S counter shows he has 32 cars brought in. RONNIE has the momentum.

Show RONNIE getting more and more intense. He slowly puts the sign down, and then just waves the cars in one after another using mind control. His count is up to 27 cars. BLAKE sits at 34 cars.

CUT TO: FULL SCREEN CLOSE-UP of BLAKE doing completely off the wall moves. He tries the robot. He breakdances. He does the Flashdance routine. Show a slow motion close-up of his

sweaty and intense face.

SPLIT SCREEN - EXT. ON STREET CORNER WITH BLAKE / EXT. ON STREET CORNER WITH RONNIE

RONNIE brings in 32, 33, 34, 35 cars. He's in a trance, with his eyes closed and waving cars in one after the other.

CUT TO: A tightly edited sequence of a person parking their car, getting out, and sprinting over to Great Clips. There's a line of customer around the corner at Great Clips. Show two hair dressers looking at each other and shrugging their shoulders.

SPLIT SCREEN - EXT. ON STREET CORNER WITH BLAKE / EXT. ON STREET CORNER WITH RONNIE

Both RONNIE and BLAKE sit at 37 cars. At the last second, a car pulls in to RONNIE'S entrance. RONNIE lifts his arms up...and levitates. BLAKE jumps around, hopping mad.

INT. IN RONNIE'S APARTMENT, ON THE SOFA

RONNIE

I don't remember much about that day.

Show close-up of RONNIE in a complete trance on the street corner that day, shaking uncontrollably like someone possessed, waving cars in.

RONNIE

I just closed my eyes and...became the sign. You know? No? It's hard to explain.

RONNIE puts a briefcase in his lap and opens it.

RONNIE (CONT'D)

Blake has a completely different style. He's a great, great signer. Well, he was a great signer.

RONNIE pulls out a fake beard from the briefcase, carefully unfolds it and puts it on, then grabs a large GREAT CLIPS sign.

RONNIE

Master, the student becomes.

PAN OVER as former GURU Todd Baxter, now in plain clothes, shrugs his shoulders and smiles awkwardly. BLAKE sits next

to him, with his hand on his knee. His other hand grasps a random sign.

GURU

Let it go Blake.

Blake let's go of the sign and puts both his hands in his lap.

STILL SHOT of RONNIE doing a yoga pose on the street corner. Music plays as the shot pans in on his face.

FADE OUT